

The News - Banner

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THURSDAY, JULY 11, 2024

BLUFFTON, INDIANA • Wells County's Hometown Connection

\$1.00



Yvonne Clark, right, and her dog Daisy look over some wood carving pieces, made by Jared and Karen Adams of Lucy Estelle Design. (Photo by Jonathan Snyder)

Local parking lot farmers market growing like a weed

By JONATHAN SNYDER

For summer Saturdays over the last several years, a farmers market located in the Family Farm and Home parking lot has seen tremendous growth.

Some Saturdays have filled one side of the parking lot completely, according to long-time vendor Lana Miller. Miller, who owns Lana's Country Kitchen, serves cookies, bagels and other baked goods at the market every Saturday. According to her and Family Farm and

Home manager Ken Enneking, the market has grown from the high of 25 vendors one week last year, to about 36 vendors weekly this summer.

"That's (36) kind of at capacity for me for the amount of space I have," Enneking said.

Word of mouth is the driving factor in the market's growth, according to Enneking. Enneking stated that some vendors from Fort Wayne and Berne have come

(Continued on Page 2)



Mayor John Whicker, left, presented the outgoing managing director of Bluffton's WEG plant, Silvio Billo, with an certificate recognizing him as a honorary citizen of Bluffton. Above at right, Billo jokes that the citizenship was good timing because he was going to run for mayor. (Photos by Holly Gaskill)

WEG's Silvio Billo is named 'honorary citizen'

By HOLLY GASKILL

In just under a week, Bluffton will be represented by an 'honorary citizen' in Brazil.

During a special send-off Wednesday afternoon, Mayor John Whicker recognized Silvio Billo as an 'honorary Bluffton citizen.' Billo has worked as the managing director of WEG Commercial Motors in Bluffton since 2016 when WEG acquired Bluffton Motor Works.

According to WEG Finance Leader John Stauffer, the company has invested over \$25 million in capital equipment and facility improvements under Billo's leadership. Billo has also been personally involved in numerous local organizations.

After eight years of investment in the company and community, Billo is moving



Mayor John Whicker presents Ravi Jagannathan, incoming managing director of WEG's Bluffton location, with a certificate welcoming him to Bluffton.

Tuesday to work at WEG's headquarters in Jaraguá do Sul, Brazil.

"Congratulations on your outstanding leadership and dedicated service to the Bluffton community," Whicker said during the presentation. "Since 2016, Silvio has

(Continued on Page 2)

Wells and White vie for Dem attorney general nod

Four also seeking lieutenant governor nomination

By WHITNEY DOWNARD
Indiana Capital Chronicle

On Saturday, the Indiana Democratic Party will host its own convention to nominate its candidates for lieutenant governor and attorney general — similar to the Republican Party's convention last month in which delegates chose Noblesville pastor Micah Beckwith over party favorite Julie McGuire.

Two women have stepped up as candidates for attorney general: Lt. Col. Destiny Wells and former county clerk Beth White. Both described the actions of the office's current inhabitant — Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita — as a disservice to Hoosiers and decried his partisan approach to the largely technocratic office.

"He's not doing what he can be doing or could be doing to protect people," White said. "I think that the Attorney General's Office has just been politicized by Todd Rokita in a way that's not helpful to Hoosiers."

Even advisories have taken a turn for the political, White said, including one on the use of preferred pronouns in the workplace.

Wells previously worked in the office under former Attorney General Curtis Hill. Morale under both officeholders has fallen after repeated controversies, she said, and dozens of experienced attorneys have left to pursue other opportunities.

"I think the more partisan the office has gotten ... (and) leadership having a partisan agenda really degrades the work of the attorneys," Wells said.

Recruiting the next level of attorneys and improving the health of the office would be two of the biggest challenges, Wells said, upon assuming office. But there are also transformative opportunities, like adding a position to oversee labor law violations like the Illinois Attorney General's Office.

"We need to reimagine how that office can better help Hoosiers," Wells said.

Candidate particulars

Wells said her journey in politics "was always about" the Office of Attorney General, where she was a deputy attorney general for government litigation. But in 2020, Wells said she was "too new" to run for the office, instead opting to run for secretary of state in 2022 — a race she lost on a 54-40 vote to current officeholder Diego Morales.

"I'm really glad I did that because that was the preparation I needed to actually run for attorney general," Wells said.

One of the reasons that 2024 will be different from 2022, Wells said, was because of the timing of the election with national races. In 2022, Morales was one of many right-wing candidates and "nobody was focused on Indiana."

Destiny Wells, a Democrat from Morgan

(Continued on Page 8)

Israeli military orders evacuation of Gaza City, early target of war

By WAFAA SHURAFU
and SAMY MAGDY
Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — The Israeli military urged all Palestinians to leave Gaza City and head south Wednesday, pressing ahead with a fresh offensive across the north, south and center of the embattled territory that has killed dozens of people over the past 48 hours.

The stepped-up military activity came as U.S., Egyptian and Qatari mediators met with Israeli officials in the Qatari capital, Doha, for talks seeking a long-elusive cease-fire deal with Gaza's Hamas militant group in exchange for the release of dozens of Israeli hostages it is holding.

Israel says it is pursuing Hamas fighters that are regrouping in various parts of Gaza nine months into the war. But heavy strikes in recent days along the length of the territo-

ry also could be aimed at putting more pressure on Hamas in the cease-fire talks.

In a visit Wednesday to central Gaza, Israel's military chief, Lt. Gen. Herzl Halevi, said forces were operating in different ways, in multiple parts of the territory "to carry out a very important mission: pressure. We will continue operating to bring home the hostages."

Israel informed people in Gaza of the evacuation order by dropping leaflets urging "all those in Gaza City" to take two "safe routes" south to the area around the central town of Deir al-Balah. Gaza City, it said, will "remain a dangerous combat zone."

Months ago, Israel ordered residents of northern Gaza, including Gaza City, to flee south, and much of the population left earlier in the war. Large parts of Gaza City and urban areas around it have been flattened or

(Continued on Page 3)

House passes bill requiring proof of citizenship to vote

By ALI SWENSON
and FARNOUSH AMIRI
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House on Wednesday passed a proof-of-citizenship requirement for voter registration, a proposal Republicans have prioritized as an election-year talking point even as research shows noncitizens illegally registering and casting ballots in

federal elections is exceptionally rare.

The legislation, approved largely along partisan lines but with five Democrats voting in favor, is unlikely to advance through the Democratic-led Senate. The Biden administration also says it's strongly opposed because there already are safeguards to enforce the law against noncitizen voting.

Still, the House vote will give Republicans an opportunity to bring attention to two of their central issues this year — border and election security.

It also provides an opportunity to fuel former President Donald Trump's claims that Democrats have encouraged the surge of migrants so they can register them to vote, which would be illegal.

Noncitizens are not allowed to vote in federal elections, nor is it allowed for any statewide elections.

Research and audits in several states show there have been incidences of noncitizens who successfully registered to vote and cast ballots, but it happens rarely and is typically by mistake. States have mechanisms to check for it,

although there isn't one standard protocol they all follow.

Republican House Speaker Mike Johnson, a key backer of the bill, said in a news conference earlier this week that the Democratic opposition means many Democrats "want illegals to participate in our federal elections; they want them to vote."

(Continued on Page 2)

Inside

Local/Area

Local News 3
Police Notebook ... 3


Opinion

Angelkeep 4

Also...

Sports 6
Classifieds 7
Diversions 5

Outside



A break in the rain means sunny and hot weather

Today	Friday	Saturday
High 81	High 84	High 85
Low 63	Low 65	Low 69

More Weather on Page 2

Online

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Vol. 95 No. 213

THURSDAY
July 11, 2024

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Farmers market

(Continued from Page 1)
down to the market to sell their wares. From plants and vegetables, to arts, crafts and food items, there's no shortage of home-based businesses that come through the market weekly.

While the market has been at Family Farm and Home for four years, the market itself has existed for much longer. According to Miller, they started about 20 years ago as a farm and flea market, selling on Saturday mornings and Wednesday evenings out of the parking lot next to the Wells County Public Library. These early years included a short

stint of sales at Kehoe Park, approximately where the concert stage is.

After a couple years it moved to the Dutch Mill Plaza across from the Marathon gas station. The market stayed at the plaza for years after that, until they moved up north to the Family Farm and Home location. Enneking was very welcoming to the idea, according to Miller, who proposed the idea of setting up in his lot.

"He (Enneking) actually wanted something like this," Miller said. "It's a win-win for both of us. His customers come to our booths, our customers go in the store."

Enneking does not charge for vendors to set up in his parking lot, while noting that space is on a "first come, first serve" basis. Enneking also allows for vendors and customers to buy and sell directly out of their vehicles, a convenience for older vendors and customers.

"There are people that have driven through because they have walkers or can't get out and they would roll down their window," Miller said. "We can wait on those customers who are partially disabled, and who can't get out and walk. We're able to wait on those people."

For Miller, the vendors

and their willingness to help have created a tight-knit community surrounding the market. Miller cited one instance where a personal emergency forced her away from the market. Various other vendors helped sell her wares and tear down the booth during her absence, even dropping the equipment off at her residence after the market finished.

"I love that people like the social part of it and visiting with people," Miller said. "They get to know, you get to know them and their families ... we have good camaraderie down there."

jonathan@news-banner.com

Weather

Thursday, July 11, 2024

(24-hour observations at 10:46 p.m. Wednesday)
High: 78; **Low:** 65; **Precipitation:** 0.61 inches of rain
Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 1.72 feet at 8:45 p.m. Wednesday

Wells County forecast

Today: Patchy fog before 9 a.m. Otherwise, mostly sunny, with a high near 81. West wind around 5 mph becoming calm.

Tonight: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 63. Southeast wind around 5 mph.

Friday: A 20% chance of showers and thunderstorms after 2 p.m. Mostly sunny, with a high near 84. East wind around 5 mph becoming calm.

Friday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 65. Calm wind.

Saturday: A 20% chance of showers and thunderstorms after 2 p.m. Mostly sunny, with a high near 85.

Saturday Night: A slight chance of showers and thunderstorms before 8 p.m., then a slight chance of showers and thunderstorms after 2 a.m. Mostly clear, with a low around 69. Chance of precipitation is 20%.

Sunday: A 30% chance of showers and thunderstorms, mainly after 8 a.m. Mostly sunny, with a high near 88.

Sunday Night: A 20% chance of showers and thunderstorms after 2 a.m. Mostly clear, with a low around 72.

Monday: A slight chance of showers and thunderstorms before 8 a.m., then a slight chance of showers and thunderstorms after 2 p.m. Sunny and hot, with a high near 90. Chance of precipitation is 20%.

Monday Night: A 30% chance of showers and thunderstorms. Partly cloudy, with a low around 72.

Tuesday: A 30% chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly sunny and hot, with a high near 90.

Tuesday Night: A chance of showers and thunderstorms. Partly cloudy, with a low around 69.

Wednesday: A chance of showers and thunderstorms. Partly sunny, with a high near 82.

Billo named 'honorary citizen'

(Continued from Page 1)
significantly enhanced our local operations through substantial investments and improvements. His unwavering support for community organizations and events has made a lasting impact, fostering a stronger and more connected community. Thank you, Silvio, for your invaluable contributions and commitment to Bluffton."

"I love this place — and it's really not just a speech, guys, I will miss this place," Billo said, adding with a quick joke, "especially my friends from River Terrace." While not near retirement age, Billo has struck up friendships in the neighborhood.

Billo continued, again mixing humor with sentimentalities, "And I'll be back, so don't be happy — I'll be back. We have an engineering team that's under our area there in Brazil — we are going to continue to invest in product development to bring new business opportunities to this place. So you're gonna



John Stauffer, finance leader at WEG in Bluffton, speaks about the company to guests Wednesday afternoon. Pictured at left is the plant's outgoing managing director Silvio Billo and Julio Ramirez, representing the WEG board of directors, middle. (Photo by Holly Gaskill)

see me in the Walmart, in the El Camino Real (when I'm back)."

Also celebrating Billo's impact and transition were multiple WEG employees, including Julio Ramirez from the company's board of directors, community and business leaders, and state and local elected officials.

"Since your leadership ... you've really changed the

culture," said Erin Prible, executive director of the Wells County Chamber of Commerce. "The perception of WEG has just been outstanding, and getting your employees involved in the community has just been a turning point."

Billo succeeded in the role by Ravi Jagannathan, who comes to the plant from India. Whicker also pre-

sented Jagannathan with a certificate welcoming him to the community.

Now with honorary citizenship, Billo joked to Whicker, "To be honest, I was thinking about being the next mayor of Bluffton."

"Well, one of the things with being an honorary citizen is we don't tax you," Whicker chuckled.

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Proof of citizenship

(Continued from Page 1)

During a speech Wednesday, he called the vote a "generation-defining moment."

"If just a small percentage, a fraction of a fraction of all those illegals that Joe Biden has brought in here to vote, if they do vote, it wouldn't just change one race," he said. "It might potentially change all of our races."

On his Truth Social platform this week, Trump suggested that Democrats are pushing to give noncitizen migrants the right to vote and urged Republicans to pass the legislation — the Safeguard American Voter Eligibility Act — or "go home and cry yourself to sleep."

The fixation on noncitizen voting is part of a broader and long-term Trump campaign strategy of casting doubt on the validity of an election should he lose, and he has consistently pushed that narrative during his campaign rallies this year. Last month in Las Vegas, he told supporters, "The only way they can beat us is to cheat." It also is part of a wider Republican campaign strategy, with GOP lawmakers across the country passing state legislation and putting noncitizen voting measures on state ballots for November.

One Democrat who voted for the GOP bill, Rep. Vincente Gonzalez, said he only did so because the bill was doomed in the Senate.

"It's not going anywhere," said Gonzalez, who represents a competitive border district in Texas. "It's just another Republican messaging bill."

The majority of Democrats and

voting rights advocates have said the legislation is unnecessary because it's already a felony for noncitizens to register to vote in federal elections, punishable by fines, prison or deportation. Anyone registering must attest under penalty of perjury that they are a U.S. citizen. Noncitizens also are not allowed to cast ballots at the state level. A handful of municipalities allow them to vote in some local elections.

They also have pointed to surveys showing that millions of Americans don't have easy access to up-to-date documentary proof of citizenship, such as a birth certificate, naturalization certificate or passport, and therefore the bill could inhibit U.S. citizen voters who aren't able to further prove their status.

During the Wednesday floor debate, Rep. Joe Morelle of New York, the top Democrat on the House Administration Committee, expressed concern that the bill would disenfranchise various American citizens.

He mentioned military members stationed abroad who couldn't show documentary proof of citizenship in person at an election office, as well as married women whose names have changed, Native Americans whose tribal IDs don't show their place of birth and natural disaster survivors who have lost their personal documents.

Morelle said he doesn't see the bill as an attempt to maintain voter rolls, but as part of larger GOP-led plans to question the validity of the upcoming election.

"The false claim that there is a conspiracy to register noncitizens is a

pretext for trying to overturn the 2024 election, potentially leading to another tragedy on January 6th, 2025," he said.

Yet Republicans who support the bill contend the unprecedented surge of migrants illegally crossing the U.S.-Mexico border creates too large a risk of noncitizens slipping through the cracks and casting ballots that sway races in November.

"Every illegal vote cancels out the vote of a legal American citizen," said Rep. Bryan Steil of Wisconsin, the Republican chair of the House Administration Committee.

If passed, the bill would require noncitizens to be removed from state voter rolls and require new applicants to provide documentary proof of U.S. citizenship. It also would require states to establish a process for applicants who can't show proof to provide other evidence beyond their attestation of citizenship, though it's unclear what that evidence could include.

Ohio Secretary of State Frank LaRose recently found 137 suspected noncitizens on the state's rolls — out of roughly 8 million voters — and said he was taking action to confirm and remove them.

In 2022, Georgia's Republican secretary of state, Brad Raffensperger, conducted an audit of his state's voter rolls specifically looking for noncitizens. His office found that 1,634 had attempted to register to vote over a period of 25 years, but election officials had caught all the applications and none had been able to register.

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July 13 **15th Annual 4-H 5k Run/Walk, Fast & Furriest 1 Mile Dog Run/Walk** July 13

Where: Wells County 4-H Fairgrounds located on the south side of Bluffton, IN off of State Road 1.

When: Saturday, July 13, 2024 5K Run/Walk Starts at 7:30 AM

Entry Fee: Dog & Owner- \$30 Race Day
Individual- \$25 Race Day
Family Special- \$60 Race Day

(4 entries, in same envelope, separate forms, same immediate family) Please don't abuse

Make Checks Payable to: Wells County 4-H Foundation (Shirts will be available to race-day registrants as supplies last)

Registration: **Race Day registration will begin at 6:45 AM**

Events-----5K (3.1 Miles)-----Age Groups

Boys 14 & Under • Boys 15-18 • Men 19-29 • Men 30-39 • Men 40-49 • Men 50 & Over
Girls 14 & Under • Girls 15-18 • Women 19-29 • Women 30-39 • Women 40-49 • Women 50 & Over

Dog Awards- Fastest, Furriest and Cutest Duo

Awards will be present to the 1st Male and Female Overall Winners.

Award will also be given to the 1st, 2nd, & 3rd places in each age group.

Drinks will be available for participants on the course and after the race.

Information Email: monica.edgeman@gmail.com or vanderkoekm@gmail.com

15th Annual 4-H 5k Run/Walk, Fast & Furriest 1 Mile Dog Run/Walk

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Email _____

Birthday: ____/____/____ **Male or Female**

Shirt Size: YM YL S M L XL XXL

Dog Breed: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent Signature: _____ (Signature of parent or Guardian REQUIRED if Participant is 17 or under 18 years of age.)

Release Form for 4-H 5K Fun Run/Walk

I am signing this entry, attest and verify that I have full knowledge of the risks involved in participation of this event and that I am physically fit and sufficiently trained to participate in this event. I understand that my signature signifies that in acceptance of my entry, I for myself, my executor, administrators, and assignees do hereby release and discharge the Wells County 4-H Foundation, all sponsors, their representatives, and successors, from all claims or liabilities of any kind arising from my participation in running/walking the event. I grant my permission to all of the foregoing to any photographs, motion pictures, recordings, or any other records or this event for legitimate purpose. I understand that bikes, skates, scooters or dogs are not allowed.

WELLS COUNTY 4-H FAIR
JULY 13-19

The Wells County 4-H Parade Committee invites you and your organization to participate in the 2024 4-H Parade on Saturday, July 13.

Parade line up will begin at 9:30 AM at the Bluffton Regional south parking lot and northeast parking lot.

At 10:00 AM the parade leaves the downtown area and at 10:30 AM the parade arrives at the 4-H Park. Parade participants are encouraged NOT to throw items from the parade units due to danger from moving vehicles.

Let the Games Begin!

Forms not accepted unless accompanied by a printed or typed description narrative.

4-H PARADE ENTRY FORM

Check entry: _____ Due ASAP

<input type="checkbox"/> 4-H Float ONLY	<input type="checkbox"/> Car
<input type="checkbox"/> 4-H Attendance Entry ONLY	<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency/ Fire Unit
<input type="checkbox"/> 4-H Float AND Attendance Entry	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial Unit(s)
<input type="checkbox"/> Marching Band (Band/Baton)	<input type="checkbox"/> Type and number of entries:
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)	_____

NAME OF GROUP, INDIVIDUAL, BUSINESS: _____

NAME OF PERSON IN CHARGE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE # OF PERSON IN CHARGE: _____

E-MAIL: _____ **CITY:** _____

COMMENTS/SPECIAL NEEDS: _____

Attach narrative description. Return to Wells County Extension Office, 1240 4-H Park, Bluffton, IN 46714 • ASAP

Full Schedule: www.extension.purdue.edu/wells

Police Notebook

INCIDENTS

City:
 Wednesday, July 3, 2:57 p.m., Main Street and Capri Court. Traffic offense. One arrested for operating a vehicle while never having received a license.
 Wednesday, July 3, 4:11 p.m., Monroe Street and Kensington Drive. Citation issued for speeding.
 Wednesday, July 3, 4:49 p.m., Moose Lodge. Male observed sleeping by dumpster. Man refused to identify and said the apartment he had intended to rent when he had moved here had been rented to someone else. He said he was just taking a nap; appeared in fine health.
 Wednesday, July 3, 4:56 p.m., 1000 block of South Williams Street. Caller reported they believed a sexual offender had been looking through the window of the residence.
 Wednesday, July 3, 5:09 p.m., Rotary Park. Caller reported an individual on a lawn mower had been harassing them repeatedly. Advised to seek a protective order or trespass through the Parks Department. No action taken at this time.
 Wednesday, July 3, 5:30 p.m., Walmart. Customer lost ID, and another customer had taken it.
 Wednesday, July 3, 8:05 p.m., 1219 Hollyhock Lane. Complaint of juveniles firing off fireworks. Juveniles told officer they only had sparklers left. Officer advised to not hit other houses.
 Wednesday, July 3, 11:06 p.m., Johnson and Water streets. 911 call. Female and child heard yelling. Unable to locate source. Everyone in the area advised they were OK.
 Wednesday, July 3, 403 S Indiana St. Juveniles advised to go home or they would receive curfew tickets.
 Thursday, July 4, 1:41 a.m., Main Street and Charles Deam Court. Intoxicated driver.
 Thursday, July 4, 8:36 a.m., 700 block of Creek Drive. Three individuals in vehicle, possible squatters. All warned for trespassing.
 Thursday, July 4, 4:25 p.m., Walmart. Lost check-book.
 Thursday, July 4, 10:32 p.m., 1303 S Main St. Personal injury accident.
 Thursday, July 4, 10:53 p.m., 220 Premier Ave. German Shepherd bit juvenile. Owner not located.
 Friday, 3:26 a.m., Dazey's Supply. Traffic offense. One arrested.
 Friday, 9:21 a.m., Bluffton Regional Medical Center. Out of control, combative patient. Nursing staff struck by patient.
 Friday, 12:05 p.m., 400 block of West Wabash Street. Unwanted party. Warned for trespassing.
 Friday, 1:52 p.m., 400 block of West Wabash Street. Report of harassment.
 Friday, 3:27 p.m., Walmart. Report of theft.
 Friday, 3:29 p.m., Grand Sweet Shop. Report of suspicious activity.
 Friday, 3:29 p.m., Walgreens. Individual already has trespass warning, will file charges.
 Friday, 6:38 p.m., CoCo China Buffet. Report of dog in vehicle. Officer found the

windows cracked open and vehicle was in the shade.
 Friday, 6:56 p.m., 124 S Oak St. Report of juveniles attempting to break into the building. Juveniles had moved along, and damage appeared pre-existing.
 Friday, 9:17 p.m., Central Avenue and Scott Street. Verbal dispute between two former coworkers. Parties separated.
 Saturday, 12:03 a.m., Baldwin and Wabash streets. Report of fireworks. Unable to locate.
 Saturday, 12:54 a.m., 500 block of West Miller Street. Verbal domestic dispute. Parties advised to separate for the night. Uninvolved male arrested on warrant.
 Sunday, 1:43 a.m., Main and Lamar St. Traffic stop. Driver cited for no proof of insurance.
 Saturday, 10:28 a.m., Main Street and Wiley Avenue. Intoxicated driver.
 Saturday, 11:26 a.m., Walmart. Property damage accident.
 Saturday, 1:24 p.m., Kroger. Property damage accident.
 Saturday, 1:29 p.m., Walmart. ID found.
 Saturday, 4:19 p.m., Dairy Queen. Property damage accident.
 Saturday, 11:46 p.m., Wabash and Baldwin streets. Report of fireworks. Unable to locate.
 Sunday, 1:13 a.m., 500 block of West Miller Street. Report of an individual outside bedroom window mummbling, appeared to have a knife. Man taken into custody.
 Sunday, 9:44 a.m., 1600 Greenfield Lane. Verbal domestic issue.
 Sunday, 11:43 a.m., 900 block of West Washington Street. Half a tank of gas reported stolen from vehicle in alley. No cameras or suspects.
 Sunday, 1:47 p.m., Dustman Road and Orchard View Drive. Traffic stop. One arrested.
 Sunday, 3:35 p.m., 300 block of East South Street. Small child walking on the street alone, returned home and officer spoke with mother.
 Sunday, 6:06 p.m., 800 block of Avondale Drive. Caller reported that four Hispanic men had allegedly recorded her daughters two days ago while at the pool and attempted to get the daughters to go home with them. Advised to make pool management aware and to notify the police if the men were seen again.
 Sunday, 8:20 p.m., 600 block of South Jersey Street. Caller reported two juveniles were walking around the residence and knocking on her door. Juveniles ran off.
 Sunday, 8:45 p.m., 500 block of West Market Street. Report of loud music. Advised to keep down.
 Sunday, 10:01 p.m., 627 W Arnold St. Wires down across vehicle.
 Sunday, 10:52 p.m., 204 W Wabash St. Customer did not want to leave at close.
 Sunday, 11:06 p.m., Valley Park Apartments. Caller reported potential squatters at apartment. Manager said the suspects were not tenants.
 Sunday, 11:51 p.m., 11293S 700E. Personal injury accident.

Monday, 1:28 a.m., 200 block of North Oak Street. Caller reported neighbor's pitbull was roaming in the caller's yard. Dog returned home and secured.
 Monday, 8:11 a.m., Fairview Cemetery. Tent in the west side of the cemetery. Found unoccupied.
 Monday, 1:28 p.m., 300 block of West Wabash Street. Woman reportedly having a breakdown, yelling at kids and making threats toward the adults in the residence.
 Tuesday, 6:30 p.m., 1200 block of West Washington Street. Report of woman screaming for help. Verbal domestic dispute.
 Tuesday, 6:43 p.m., Lancaster and Union streets. Traffic stop. Driver arrested for never having had a license.
 Tuesday, 8:08 p.m., Main Street and Suttle Circle Drive. Fuel removed from roadway.
 Tuesday, 10:30 p.m., 100N and S.R. 116. Report of a vehicle driving at high speeds and changing lanes without signaling. Driver warned for driving behavior.
 Wednesday, 12:10 a.m., 900 block of West Market Street. Report of an attempted break-in.
 Wednesday, 6:27 a.m., 325 E Silver St. Loose cat.
 Wednesday, 9:29 a.m., 204 W Wabash St. Flock camera alert on vehicle. Determined the Flock alert was not connected to the driver. Alerted agency.
 Wednesday, 11:53 a.m., Jersey Street and Wiley Avenue. Noise complaint.
 Wednesday, 12:42 p.m., Budget Inn. Unwanted party. Trespassing warning issued.
 Wednesday, 1:06 p.m., Wendy's. Unwanted party. Officer spoke with manager.
County:
 Tuesday, 12:51 p.m., 5400E S.R. 201, Bluffton. Subject reported someone using his credit card.
 Tuesday, 2:54 p.m., 2900E 200S, Bluffton. Report of two unwanted men on property.
 Tuesday, 10:03 p.m., 600W 900S, Keystone. Car versus deer.
 Tuesday, 11:03 p.m., East 1000S and South 250E, Keystone. Car versus deer.
 Tuesday, 11:48 p.m., Fairview Cemetery. Report of a tent in the cemetery.
 Wednesday, 7:08 a.m., South 500W and West 300S, Liberty Center. Car versus deer.
FIRES
 Friday, 11:28 p.m., Arnold and Mulberry streets, Bluffton. Dumpster fire. Bluffton Fire Department responded. Juvenile said their friend may have started it when relighting fireworks. Fire under control at 11:36 p.m.
 Sunday, 1:41 a.m., 401 E South St. Possible structure fire. Smoke coming from detached garage at the back of the property. Ossian, Liberty Township and Bluffton fire departments responded.
 Sunday, 4:21 p.m., Erie Stone. Report of natural gas smell. Bluffton Fire Department responded. Unable to locate.
 Wednesday, 9:54 a.m., Norwell High School. Fire alarm. False trigger.
 Wednesday, 11:33 a.m., 319 S S.R. 201, Bluffton. Dumpster on fire. Second fire in two weeks. Bluffton Fire Department responded. Fire under control at 11:44 a.m.



A summer celebration

The first 100 single scoops of ice cream were free at Topplings in Bluffton on Wednesday, courtesy of Doug Fear at Edward Jones. Employees Mari Topp and Etta Steffan, pictured above, said there were about 40 customers waiting in line for the free treat when the ice cream parlor opened, shown left. (Above photo by Holly Gaskill, left photo provided)

Israeli military

(Continued from Page 1)
 left a shattered landscape by previous Israeli assaults.
 The United Nations says about 300,000 Palestinians have remained in the hard-hit north, with the bulk of those said to be in Gaza City.
 Most of Gaza's 2.3 million people are crammed into squalid tent camps in central and southern Gaza.
 Israeli troops have pushed into parts of Gaza City in recent days, triggering the flight of thousands of Palestinians trying to escape shelling and airstrikes. This past week, the military ordered Palestinians to evacuate from eastern and central parts of the city.
 There was no immediate mass exodus from the city following Wednesday's order. Many Palestinians have concluded that there is no refuge in war-stricken Gaza.
 The military, meanwhile, said it wrapped up an operation launched late last month in the Gaza City neighborhood of Shijaiyah, where it killed dozens of militants and destroyed eight underground tunnels.
 Wednesday's evacuation order came after a series of deadly strikes over the past two days in other parts of the territory. Israeli bombardment early Wednesday hit four houses in Deir al-Balah and the nearby Nuseirat refugee camp, killing 20 Palestinians.
 Among the dead were six children and three women, according to officials at al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital, where the casualties were taken. An Associated Press reporter counted the bodies. The house hit in Deir al-Balah was inside the "humanitarian safe zone" where Israel has told Palestinians to flee for refuge.
 The overnight bombardment came hours after Israeli warplanes struck the

entrance of a school sheltering displaced families outside the southern city of Khan Younis. The toll from the strike rose to 31 people killed, including eight children, and more than 50 wounded, officials at the nearby Nasser Hospital said Wednesday.
 Footage aired by Al Jazeera television showed kids playing soccer in the school's yard when a sudden boom shook the area, prompting shouts of "a strike, a strike!"
 The Israeli army said the airstrike near the school and reports of civilian casualties were under review. It claimed it was targeting a Hamas militant who took part in the Oct. 7 attack on Israel that triggered the war, though it provided no immediate evidence. The military blames civilian deaths on Hamas

because the militants fight in dense, urban areas. But the army rarely comments on what it is targeting in individual strikes, which often kill women and children.
 In nine months of bombardment and offensives in Gaza, Israel has killed more than 38,200 people and wounded more than 88,000, according to the territory's Health Ministry, which does not distinguish between combatants and civilians in its count. Nearly the entire population has been driven from their homes. Many have been displaced multiple times.
 During the Oct. 7 raid, militants killed 1,200 people in southern Israel, most of them civilians, according to Israeli authorities. The militants took roughly 250 people hostage. About 120 are still in captivity, with about a third said to be dead.

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Swift's life choices are fodder for attack. Don't buy it.

I am not a Swiftie. I can't name a single song by Taylor Swift besides "Shake it off." But a recent Newsweek column about her life choices has me infuriated.

John MacGhlionn opined that Swift is not a good role model. Why? Because she is 34, unmarried and childless.

"While Swift's musical talent and business acumen are certainly admirable, even laudable, we must ask if her personal life choices are ones we want our sisters and daughters to emulate. This might sound like pearl-clutching preaching, but it's a concern rooted in sound reasoning."

Excuse me? I know this topic is off the beaten path for me, but that's how much it stirred me.

This latest column is yet another example of how judgmental America has become. The world has changed since the Cleavers slept in separate beds. And I for one am glad that a woman can be a good role model whether she is a wife, a mother or neither.

My 25-year-old daughter is set to be married in just a few months and I am so incredibly happy for her. She was lucky enough to meet a wonderful, respectful man with common interests and humor.

But let's be clear. If she hadn't, I would still be proud of a young woman working hard and finding her own way in life. I don't care if she is married or has kids one little bit.

Swift, a pop megastar and businesswoman, isn't required to be a wife or mother to be a good role model. Everyone wants different things in life.

Let's instead look at a person's character when judging who is a role model.

Swift lost access to her first six albums when her contract expired, and she signed with a new recording studio. Most artists would have just moved on, but she re-recorded the songs that she wrote and owned. Her fans rallied around those versions.

Swift's tour has been breaking records in every city. Her show literally is an economic boon to every city she visits.

But she also has donated to numerous important initiatives over the years, from food banks and libraries to paying off student loans and aiding tornado relief efforts. Just recently she gave around \$5 million in bonuses to truck drivers on her tour.

Swift has also managed to avoid major scandals that beset other celebrities, such as drunk driving, drug use and harassment.

Over the years she has spoken up publicly about her struggle with an eating disorder and body image issues, advocating for mental health awareness.

So, she is generous, empathetic, works hard and speaks openly about struggles her fans might be facing on their own.

How is that not a role model?

Instead, the columnist focused on how many men she has dated. As long as people in relationships are open and upfront and treat each other with respect, good for them.

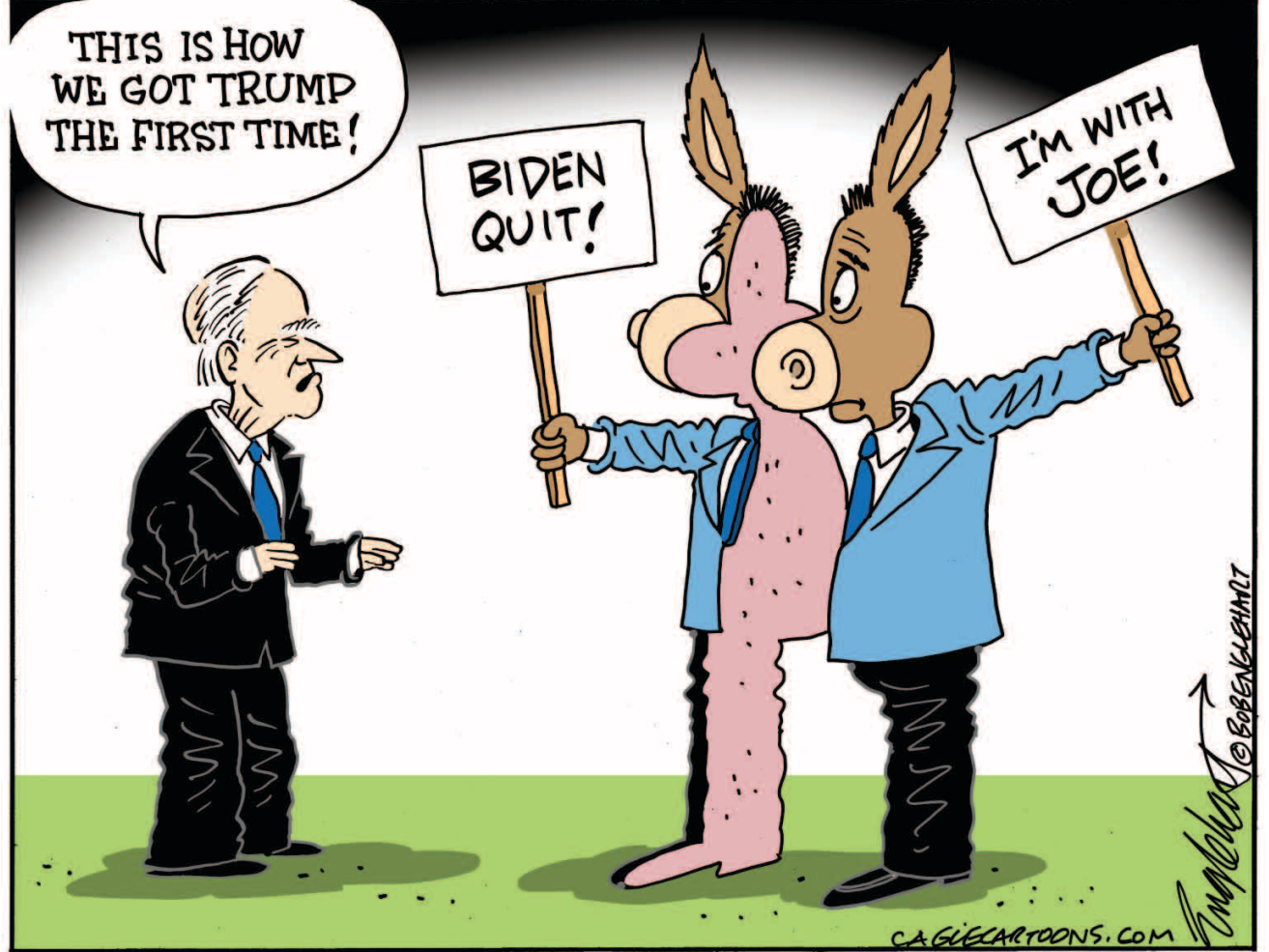
And if she finds the love we all hope to find, good for her. She deserves it. But that won't make her more or less of a role model.

Niki Kelly is the editor of the Indiana Capital Chronicle, a non-profit newsroom. nkelly@indianacapitalchronicle.com



Niki Kelly

Hoosier Opinions



The (divided) coup against Joe Biden

The Democratic Party is divided.

On the one side is the faction that wants to dump the presidential candidate chosen by more than 14 million Democratic primary voters.

On the other side is the faction that wants to keep the presidential candidate who almost certainly will not serve out his four-year term, leading to the ascension of an unelected president and unelected vice president.

What the entire party agrees on is that, either way, it is supposedly defending democracy.

There's no doubt that Joe Biden is the democratically selected presidential nominee of the Democratic Party, but also little doubt that his condition was hid from the public and that, if he had to run in a free and fair nomination contest today, he would lose handily.

An increasingly feeble President Biden was a crisis waiting to happen, and now that the crisis is upon us, there's no easy way out.

A pejorative, but accurate, description of the campaign to get Biden to quit the race is that it is an attempted intra-party coup. The voters chose Biden knowing he was 81 years old, although the party apparatus did everything possible to deny them a choice between the incumbent and a plausible alternative, and everything possible to shut down the little-known member of the House who mounted a sacrificial challenge. (If there had been a prime-time primary debate between Biden and Rep. Dean Phillips, Democrats might not have been so shocked at Biden's poor performance against Donald Trump.)

Still, for donors, pundits and elected Democrats to attempt to undo this choice is frankly undemocratic. It looks even less democratic when it is factored in that a small handful of people — Nancy Pelosi, Chuck Schumer, James Clyburn and a couple of others — are the ones who have the true power perhaps to force Biden from the race.

Leaving Biden in place isn't any better. If he's this fragile and addled in July 2024, there's no way he's going to serve in the most demanding job on

the planet until January 2029. This means the electorate will be, in effect, voting in November to make Kamala Harris president of the United States sometime in the next term, without her being at the top of the ticket and withstanding all the scrutiny and bearing all the responsibility that comes with that.

Her accession will be constitutionally legitimate, since this is how the system works. But it will be doing Harris and the country no favors to have her take the presidency without winning the office directly herself.

All this was avoidable if Joe and Jill Biden had had the foresight and public-spiritedness to decide last year that he wasn't up for another presidential campaign and another term in office. That way, there could have been a fully open primary contest with a large, robust field. The winner would have had the legitimacy of having won the most votes in the primary and presumably have raised no serious question whether — absent some terrible unforeseeable event — he or she could serve out a full term.

The Bidens made that impossible, and also created a situation where we don't know whether the sitting president is fully in charge and whether he has a serious medical condition, diagnosed or undiagnosed. Certainly, the White House has been doing everything possible to keep people from knowing about Joe Biden's reduced state, and until his catastrophic debate performance, almost all the insiders who had seen or heard about his alarming condition were happy to keep it to themselves.

"Democracy dies in darkness" is the Trump-era motto of The Washington Post. Well, the inner sanctum of the Democratic Party tried to keep the public in the dark about Joe Biden, and now either wants to dump him against the expressed will of its voters, or effectively run Kamala Harris for president without admitting to voters that that is what it's doing.

Defending democracy is hard work.

Rich Lowry is on Twitter @RichLowry



Rich Lowry

Who's Who

A continuing series on how to contact government officials

CHESTER TOWNSHIP

TRUSTEE: Steve Studebaker (R), 7620 S. Meridian Road, Poneto; home phone 694-6530.

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TRUSTEE: Chase Gentis (R), 2365S-300W, Liberty Center; phone 341-1074. Office: 2600S-300W, Liberty Center (Liberty Center fire station) 694-6300. libertytownship90@gmail.com

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Today in History

By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, July 11, the 193rd day of 2024. There are 173 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On July 11, 1995, the U.N.-designated "safe haven" of Srebrenica in Bosnia-Herzegovina fell to Bosnian Serb forces, who subsequently carried out the killings of more than 8,000 Muslim men and boys.

Also on this date:
In 1798, the U.S. Marine Corps was formally re-established by a congressional act that also created the U.S. Marine Band.

In 1804, Vice President Aaron Burr mortally wounded former Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton during a pistol duel in Weehawken, New Jersey. (Hamilton died the next day.)

In 1859, Big Ben, the

great bell inside the famous London clock tower, chimed for the first time.

In 1864, Confederate forces led by General Jubal Early began an abortive invasion of Washington, D.C., turning back the next day.

In 1914, Babe Ruth made his Major League baseball debut, pitching the Boston Red Sox to a 4-3 victory over Cleveland.

In 1921, fighting in the Irish War of Independence ended with a truce.

In 1960, Harper Lee's novel "To Kill a Mockingbird" was published.

In 1972, the World Chess Championship opened as grandmasters Bobby Fischer of the United States and defending champion Boris Spassky of the Soviet Union began play in Reykjavik, Iceland. (Fischer won after 21 games.)

A post-4th political pedigree puzzlement

Angelkeep Journals

Reflecting on July 4th celebrations never included a question of "Should we grill," but rather, "What shall we grill?"

Something on the BBQ long ago became as Independence Day American as sparklers.

Perhaps sparklers and snakes rank as "old school." Today's ability to buy and burn the "hard stuff" made it unnecessary for Angelkeep to travel to see a momentous fireworks display. Neighborhood enthusiastic holiday incendiary arsonists had enough buying power and lighting nerve to produce ample free viewing of heavenly bursts of brightly colored sparks.

During the 1950s, rolls of caps produced for cap guns but unrolled onto the sidewalk, received a smack with a hammer to make the bangs and pungent smoke smell associated with July Fourth. Survivors of the Revolutionary War would have thought that too modest. They put match to the skirmish with the British motherland.

On a political level, both political and personal, what would a Revolutionary Veteran have thought of a new American getting involved in a romantic relationship with a Brit, or Tory as they had been renamed by the opposition? Tory, Loyalist, Royalist, or King's Men, all meant the same when "spit out" in a public house pub around 1776, give or take a few years. Tar and feathers for all might have been the outcome had such a mixed political couple appeared at any Independence Day celebration in the latter 1770s.

Speaking of feathers.

The puzzlement of potential political problems of propagating

pairs preceded pondering pedigree possibilities pertaining to particular plumed populations of Angelkeep.

While dining on an Independence Day grilled brat, smothered in grill-steamed peppers and onions slathered with mustard, a cowbird appeared to dine near Angelkeep's patio. Perhaps it stopped to thank the grill for sticking with pork, no fowl, nor even cow meat. Angelkeep's thoughts moved oddly awkward after that second 4th-of-July brat on a baguette.

Cowbirds appear oddly colored, like a dip into the genetic pool failed to get a good mix. The cowbird head appeared brown with the remainder of the body blackish-blue and iridescent.

Grackles also visit Angelkeep. Grackles displayed a fondness for suet, a bird food as greasy as a July Fourth brats. Grackles shine with an iridescent head of predominately delightful blue, representing one of three holiday colors. These heads can turn green in the right lighting. Its body plumage was said to be more of a bronze sheen.

A mass collective of grackles, such as might have occurred at a neighborhood fireworks display, were named a "plague." Follow Angelkeep for more insignificant holiday trivia.

The brown-headed cowbird had



Alan Daugherty

first been described in America in 1775 by the French naturalist Georges Louis Leclerc, later Count of Buffon. Buffon, not Bluffton. He literally bought Buffon town. For that trivia, you're welcome.

Buffon's "Needle Theory," or mathematical probability theory, became the world's earliest problem in geometric probability. What's the probability of a dropped needle landing on a floor with boards in parallel lines, but ending up across a line, not in a crack?

Angelkeep's July Fourth Brat Theory: What's the chances of a dropped brat hitting the grill grate perpendicular or parallel with the grate's rods? Mathematicians thrive on this stuff. Not Angelkeep.

Full disclosure: Angelkeep brats displayed perpendicular grill burn marks.

What's the chances, as pondered genetically on America's Birthday, if a grackle mated with a cowbird? Would offspring receive a cowbird black eye or a grackle yellow eye? Or possibly, a yellow right, left with a black eye? Would the head/body colors reflect the brown/black-blue (cowbird,) or blue/bronze (grackle)? Could an all-iridescent blue bird evolve in such a marriage? What would a grilled grackle-cowbird taste like smothered in peppers and onion?

Having a July 4th holiday free from writing an Angelkeep Journals' column sure produced plentiful ponderings, pursuant to peculiar plumed population portions paused, perched prior-to, and post-brats', partaking overload.

Mr. Daugherty is a Wells County resident who, along with his wife Gwen, enjoy their backyard and have named it "Angelkeep."

The News-Banner

(USPS 059-200)

Periodicals Postage Paid at Bluffton, IN 46714.
Published every day except Sundays and principal holidays at 125 N. Johnson St., Bluffton IN 46714,
Post Office Box 436

Evening News est. 1892 • Evening Banner est. 1899 • Consolidated 1929

News-Banner Publications, Inc.
George B. Witwer, Chairman of the Board
Doug Brown, President, Publisher
Dianne Witwer, Secretary/Treasurer
Holly Gaskill, Editor
Mark Miller, Opinion Page Editor

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Major advice misstep

Dear Readers: Did you ever offer advice that you regretted because you were focused on one issue but failed to see the big picture? I did that recently, and my mistake was a doozy. A reader wrote to me telling how she had escaped an abusive marriage and found a new partner and had been happily married for many years. I chose to congratulate her on escaping from an abusive marriage, and that is all I focused on. I continue to be proud of any woman who escapes a domestic violence situation.

My oversight was in not addressing the fact that she had abandoned her 5-year-old son. She said her current problem was that her son, now grown up, only wanted money from her.

Wow, talk about a blunder on my part! I could only see the husband's abuse of his wife, and I assumed the boy's father was loving to his son. I assumed that the father had issues with his wife and not their son. I overlooked the fact that the mother never mentioned missing her son, nor did she do anything to be a part of his life. This was the colossal mistake I made. I am eternally grateful to my readers who point out when I have messed up, and today's column is my way of thanking the hundreds who wrote in to correct me.

Of course, when a mother, albeit an abused one, abandons her little boy without ever trying to get him back, she is heartless and cold. Every day I receive letters from readers who tell me they made a mistake in the way they handled a situation. Now it's my turn:

Dear Annie: I read the letter from "Emotional Blackmail," a woman who had to leave her abusive husband. She left her 5-year-old son behind. While I can understand the urgency for her to leave that awful situation, I cannot understand how she can live with herself knowing that she completely abandoned her son to her abusive ex. That she never tried to gain custody or maintain a relationship with her son is truly terrible. Her son obviously wants nothing to do with her and is using her for her money. In my opinion, it's the least she can do for totally abandoning him when he was 5 years old. — The Brutal Truth

Dear Annie: I just read a comment from your page to "Blackmail." How can you leave an abusive relationship yourself but leave your child behind? There's no excuse for that. She left her child who could not

defend himself. Now she wants us to feel sorry for her. I don't feel sorry for her for leaving her child in that situation. If you could leave, then I damn well believe you could have taken your child with you. That's a bunch of hogwash. I would not commend her for anything because she left a young innocent child behind. She only thought of herself and not her child. — Don't Feel Sorry

Dear Annie: How can you call a woman who left her child with an abuser and didn't even try to contact him since he was 5 years old strong and brave?

She abandoned her child. What did he go through? I'd die before I left mine behind. She was all he had and she just left. She owes him every dime he asks for. A sorry human is what she is in every way possible. — She Owes

Dear Annie: I am appalled by the response that you gave to the mother who left her husband because he was abusive. She left her FIVE-year-old son, too. A mother does NOT leave her children; she protects them. I would do anything for my children who are adults now. Maybe that's why they turned out so well. They always had my support, love and guidance, which is clearly something this son never had. — What a Shame

Dear Annie: The son is now reaching out for money, and your advice to her, after congratulating her on removing herself from the situation, is to distance herself from her son because, in her new husband's words, he's taking advantage of her. This woman's careless disregard for the little boy she left behind, without a hint of apology, without a shred of remorse, without any explanation for not doing more — you take this at face value. What about the feelings of a little boy left by his own mother? Perhaps he is now seeking in tangible support what she failed to give him all those years in love and kindness. I say, she owes him whatever he wants. — Shocked in NJ

Send your questions for Annie Lane to dearannie@creators.com. © 2024 CREATORS.COM

My Answer By Dr. Billy Graham



God sees the whole picture, while we see only a little part

Question: My wife and I work hard providing for our family and trying to raise them right and give them a secure home and loving environment. We've had hardships in trying to make ends meet, living a simple lifestyle while paying some enormous medical bills. We can't quite understand why so many couples like us prosper and have no difficulties in paying bills and can still travel and do just about anything they want, which doesn't include church or striving to please God, yet they prosper. Why? — O.P.

Answer: It can appear that some people who turn their backs on God seem to go through life without ever having anything bad happen to

them. Life seems so easy for them that they can't see any reason to consider God. But we don't know their hearts; deep inside many people may actually be very insecure and fearful — although unwilling to admit it to themselves or others.

God sees the whole picture, while we see only a little part. God knows what He is doing, and He can be trusted to do what is right according to His perfect plan. Sadly, these people will one day die and face God. His goodness to them should have caused them to turn with repentance and faith to Him, but instead they ignored His blessings and lived only for themselves. How tragic to enter eternity unprepared! It

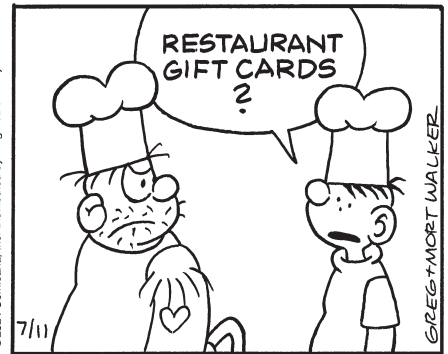
is a certainty that wherever the Word of God is hidden or ignored, there will eventually be destruction.

When we encounter such people, instead of concentrating on what looks easy for them, we should pray for their souls, that God would speak to their hearts and convict them of a life void of God. Perhaps God will use us to point others to Christ — even those who seem to have no interest in Him. We never know how the Lord is working in others' hearts.

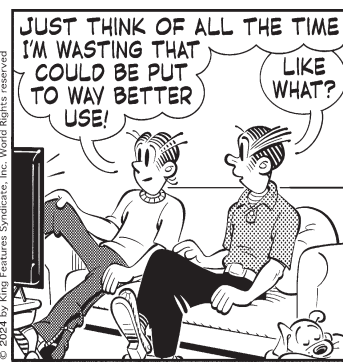
(This column is based on the words and writings of the late Rev. Billy Graham.)

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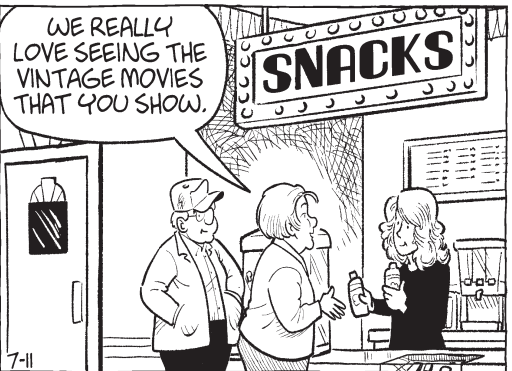
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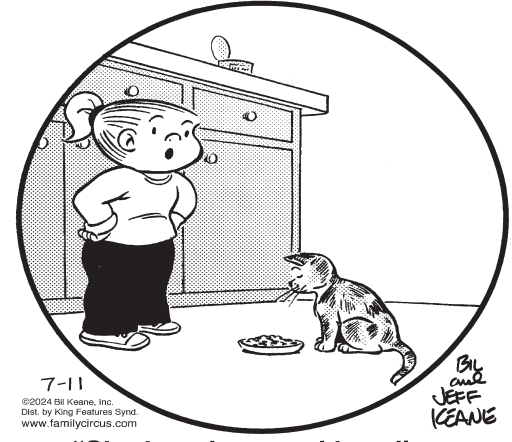


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THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane



The LOCKHORNS

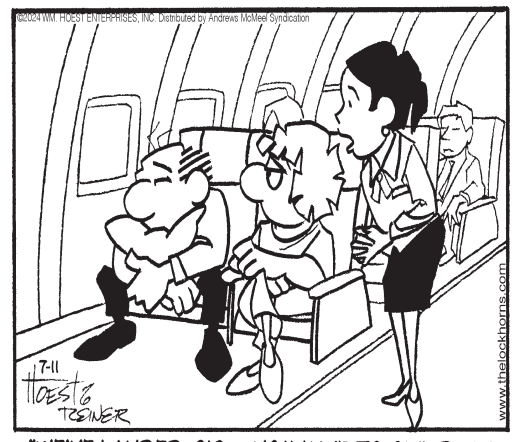


Table with columns for date, channel, and program listings for various networks like WGN, CBS, ABC, NBC, etc.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words. Includes a solution time of 24 mins and a grid for yesterday's answer.

Table with columns for date, channel, and program listings for various networks like HBO, MAX, PARSHO, TMC.

NBA agrees to terms on record 11-year, \$76 billion media rights deal, an AP source says

By **TIM REYNOLDS** and **JOE REEDY**
AP Sports Writers

The NBA has agreed to terms on its new media deal, a record 11-year agreement worth \$76 billion that assures player salaries will continue rising for the foreseeable future and one that will surely change how some viewers access the game for years to come.

A person familiar with the negotiations told The Associated Press that the networks have the terms sheets, with the next step being for the league's board of governors to approve the contracts.

The person spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity Wednesday because they weren't at liberty to discuss such impending matters.

The deal, which set NBA records for both its length and total value, goes into effect for the 2025-26 season. Games will continue being aired on ESPN and ABC, and now some will be going to NBC and Amazon Prime. TNT Sports, which has been part of the league's broadcasting family since the 1980s, could be on its way out, but has five days to match one of the deals.

The five-day clock would begin once the league sends the finished contracts to TNT. The Athletic was the first to report on the contracts.

ESPN and ABC will continue to have the league's top package, which includes the NBA Finals and one of the conference finals series. ABC has aired the NBA Finals since 2003. ABC would continue to air games on Saturday nights and Sunday afternoons when the NFL's regular season ends.

ESPN's main nights would continue to be Wednesday with some Friday and Sunday games.

The return of NBC, which carried NBA games from 1990 through 2002, gives the league two broadcast network partners for the first time.

NBC would showcase games on Sunday night once the NFL season has ended. It will air games on Tuesdays throughout the regular season while a Monday night package of games would be exclusively streamed on Peacock.

Prime Video would have games on Thursday night after it is done carrying NFL games. Its other nights would be Friday and Saturday.

NBC and Prime Video would alternate who

carries the other conference final.

In the short term, the deal almost certainly means the league's salary cap will rise 10% annually — the maximum allowed by the terms of the most recent Collective Bargaining Agreement between the NBA and its players. That means players like Oklahoma City's Shai Gilgeous-Alexander and Dallas' Luka Doncic could be making around \$80 million in the 2030-31 season and raises at least some possibility that top players may be earning somewhere near \$100 million per season by the mid-2030s.

It also clears the way for the next major item on the NBA's to-do list: Expansion.

Commissioner Adam Silver was very clear on the order of his top agenda items in recent seasons, those being preserving labor peace (which was achieved with the new CBA), getting a new media deal (now essentially completed) and then and only then would the league turn its attention toward adding new franchises. Las Vegas and Seattle are typically among the cities most prominently mentioned as top expansion candidates, with others such as Montreal, Vancouver and Kansas City expected to have groups with interest as well.

As the broadcast rights packages have grown in total value over the last 25 years, so, too, have salaries because of how much that revenue stream ends up fueling the salary cap.

When NBC and Turner agreed to a \$2.6 billion, four-year deal that started with the 1998-99 season, the salary cap was \$30 million per team and the average salary was around \$2.5 million. The average salary this season exceeded \$10 million per player — and it's only going to keep going up from here.

When that NBC-Turner deal that started a quarter-century ago expired, the next deal — covering six seasons — cost ABC, ESPN and Turner about \$4.6 billion. The next was a seven-year deal, costing those networks \$7.4 billion.

The current deal, the one that will expire next season, smashed those records — nine years, nearly \$24 billion.

And now, that seems like pocket change.

From the deal that started in 1998-99 to the one now struck to begin in 2025, the total value has climbed by about 2,800%. Factoring for inflation even between then and now, the value goes up about 1,400%.

Wander Franco scheduled for Aug. 14 trial after being charged with sexual abuse of 14-year-old girl

By **MARTIN JOSE ADAMES**
ALCANTARA Associated Press

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic (AP) — Tampa Bay Rays shortstop Wander Franco is scheduled to go to trial Aug. 14 after being charged with sexually abusing a 14-year-old girl in the Dominican Republic, authorities said Wednesday.

Prosecutors filed multiple charges against Franco six months after a judge ordered that he be investigated in connection with sexual and psychological abuse of the girl.

Nairobi Vilorio, the attorney general's office spokesperson, confirmed to The Associated Press that prosecutors presented the formal accusation to a judge.

The indictment also includes the girl's mother. According to prosecutors, Franco paid the girl's mother thousands of dollars to consent to the abuse, which lasted four months. The girl's mother remains under house arrest and faces a money laundering charge.

The AP is not identifying the woman to preserve her daughter's privacy.

The most serious charges that Franco faces are rape, for which he could receive sentences of between 10 and 15 years in prison, and human trafficking, which is punishable in the Dominican Republic by sentences of between 15 and 20 years.

Franco has remained in the Dominican Republic while authorities investigate. He has been required to make monthly monitoring visits to the court since January. In April, he requested that the visits be suspended, which the judge denied.

Franco, 23, will be tried in a court in the province of Puerto Plata, in the north of the country, where the events allegedly occurred.

"I mean, ultimately, serious charges, very concerning," Rays manager Kevin Cash said before the team's game Wednesday. "Probably best that I don't comment much past that and keep our focus on this team."

MLB placed Franco — who has a \$2 million salary this year — on its restricted list, cutting off the pay he had been receiving under administrative leave.



Another honor for Harnish

Norwell graduate Chandler Harnish will be enshrined in yet another hall of fame class. In 2022, he was added to the Northern Illinois Athletic Hall of Fame, and on Monday, July 15, he will be inducted in the Indiana Football Hall of Fame in Region 3. At left, Harnish throws the ball during a game with the Indianapolis Colts. (Photo provided)

Region 3 Indiana Football Hall of Fame set to honor Chandler Harnish next week

Chandler Harnish will be honored for his Region 3, Indiana Football Hall of Fame 2024 selection next week on Monday, July 15.



Chandler Harnish

Goeglein's Banquet Hall will host the event honoring five members including Harnish, Glen Steele, Chris Dittoe, Bob Bergeron and Roosevelt Barnes. Doors open at 6 p.m. with dinner at 6:30 p.m. and the inductions at 7 p.m. Cost is \$55 per person.

Harnish is a Norwell High School graduate, where he played football, basketball and ran track and excelled at all three. He was an all-state selection in 2006 and was a key component in the

state runner-up team that finished 14-1, according to online statistics.

Entering college, Harnish made his name behind center as a four-year starting quarterback at Northern Illinois University. His career totals included 8,944 passing yards, 2,983 rushing yards and nearly 100 total touchdowns, and earned him a 2022 NIU Hall of Fame honor.

In April 2012, the Indianapolis Colts selected Harnish with the 253rd pick.

His NFL career lasted a few seasons with the Colts, Minnesota Vikings and Arizona Cardinals.

Derrick White replaces Kawhi Leonard on U.S. Olympic team

By **TIM REYNOLDS**
AP Basketball Writer

LAS VEGAS (AP) — USA Basketball intended to bring Kawhi Leonard to the Paris Olympics. After watching him play in a four-day training camp, they and the Los Angeles Clippers realized that the plan needed to change.

Derrick White of the NBA champion Boston Celtics is replacing Leonard on the U.S.

team for the Paris, the first shakeup to a roster that was announced in the spring. The decision was made Tuesday, White accepted the invitation Tuesday night and USA Basketball announced the move Wednesday morning.

"He wanted to be here like all these guys want to be here," USA Basketball managing director Grant Hill said Wednesday night about Leonard. "And we don't take that lightly at all.

News-Banner Scoreboard

BASKETBALL

WNBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

W	L	Pct	GB
New York	18	4	818
Connecticut	17	5	.773
Chicago	9	12	429
Indiana	9	14	.391
Atlanta	7	14	.333
Washington	6	17	.261

WESTERN CONFERENCE

W	L	Pct	GB
Minnesota	16	6	.727
Las Vegas	14	7	.667
Seattle	14	8	.636
Phoenix	12	10	.545
Los Angeles	5	17	.227
Dallas	5	18	.217

Tuesday's Games

Minnesota 82, Los Angeles 67

Wednesday's Games

New York 71, Connecticut 68

Chicago 78, Atlanta 69

Washington 89, Indiana 84

Las Vegas 84, Seattle 79

Phoenix 100, Dallas 84

Thursday's Games

Chicago at New York, 7 p.m.

Friday's Games

Phoenix at Indiana, 7:30 p.m.

BASEBALL

MLB

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

W	L	Pct	GB
Baltimore	57	35	.620
New York	56	38	.596
Boston	50	41	.549
Tampa Bay	45	47	.489
Toronto	41	50	.451

Central Division

W	L	Pct	GB
Cleveland	57	34	.626
Minnesota	53	40	.570
Kansas City	51	43	.543
Detroit	44	49	.473
Chicago	27	68	.284

West Division

W	L	Pct	GB
Seattle	51	43	.543
Houston	48	44	.522
Texas	44	48	.478
Los Angeles	37	54	.407
Oakland	35	59	.372

East Division

Boston 12, Oakland 9
Houston 4, Miami 3
Texas 5, L.A. Angels 4
San Francisco 4, Toronto 3
Seattle 8, San Diego 3
Kansas City at St. Louis, ppd.
Minnesota at Chicago White Sox, ppd.

Wednesday's Games

Kansas City 6, St. Louis 4, 1st game

Chicago White Sox 3, Minnesota 1, 1st game

Thursday's Games

Minnesota 3, Chicago White Sox 2, 2nd game

Seattle 2, San Diego 0

Detroit 5, Cleveland 4

Chicago Cubs 4, Baltimore 0

N.Y. Yankees 2, Tampa Bay 1

Oakland 5, Boston 2

Kansas City 8, St. Louis 5, 2nd game

Houston 9, Miami 1

Texas at L.A. Angels, late

Toronto at San Francisco, late

Thursday's Games

Cleveland (Howard 1-1) at Detroit (Flaherty 5-5), 1:10 p.m.

Toronto (Gausman 6-8) at San Francisco (Hicks 4-5), 3:45 p.m.

Chicago Cubs (Steele 1-3) at Baltimore (Suarez 5-2), 6:35 p.m.

N.Y. Yankees (Cortes 4-7) at Tampa Bay (Baz 0-1), 6:50 p.m.

Oakland (Medina 2-3) at Boston (Houck 7-6), 7:10 p.m.

Miami (Muoz 1-3) at Houston (Bloss 0-0), 8:10 p.m.

Seattle (Castillo 7-9) at L.A. Angels (Kocharnicz 0-0), 9:38 p.m.

Friday's Games

L.A. Dodgers at Detroit, 6:40 p.m.

Oakland at Philadelphia, 6:40 p.m.

Cleveland at Tampa Bay, 6:50 p.m.

N.Y. Yankees at Baltimore, 7:05 p.m.

Kansas City at Boston, 7:10 p.m.

Pittsburgh at Chicago White Sox, 8:10 p.m.

West Division

Los Angeles	55	38	.591
San Diego	49	47	.510
Arizona	45	47	.489
San Francisco	45	47	.489
Colorado	33	60	.355

Tuesday's Games

Chicago Cubs 9, Baltimore 2

Philadelphia 10, L.A. Dodgers 1

N.Y. Mets 7, Washington 5

Cincinnati 12, Colorado 6

Houston 4, Miami 3

Pittsburgh 12, Milwaukee 2

San Francisco 4, Toronto 3

Seattle 8, San Diego 3

Atlanta 6, Arizona 2

Kansas City at St. Louis, ppd.

Wednesday's Games

Kansas City 6, St. Louis 4, 1st game

Seattle 2, San Diego 0

Chicago Cubs 4, Baltimore 0

N.Y. Mets 6, Washington 2

Philadelphia 4, L.A. Dodgers 3

Colorado 6, Cincinnati 5

Kansas City 8, St. Louis 5, 2nd game

Houston 9, Miami 1

Milwaukee 9, Pittsburgh 0

Thursday's Games

Colorado (Gomber 2-5) at Cincinnati (Greene 5-4), 1:10 p.m.

Washington (Gore 6-7) at N.Y. Mets (Peterson 3-0), 1:10 p.m.

Pittsburgh (Skene 5-0) at Milwaukee (Civale 2-6), 2:10 p.m.

Toronto (Gausman 6-8) at San Francisco (Hicks 4-5), 3:45 p.m.

L.A. Dodgers (Knack 1-2) at Philadelphia (Nola 10-4), 6:05 p.m.

Chicago Cubs (Steele 1-3) at Baltimore (Suarez 5-2), 6:35 p.m.

Friday's Games

L.A. Dodgers at Detroit, 6:40 p.m.

West Division

Los Angeles	55	38	.591
San Diego	49	47	.510
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Tuesday's Games

Chicago Cubs 9, Baltimore 2

Philadelphia 10, L.A. Dodgers 1

N.Y. Mets 7, Washington 5

Cincinnati 12, Colorado 6

Houston 4, Miami 3

Pittsburgh 12, Milwaukee 2

San Francisco 4, Toronto 3

Seattle 8, San Diego 3

Atlanta 6, Arizona 2

Kansas City at St. Louis, ppd.

Wednesday's Games

Kansas City 6, St. Louis 4, 1st game

Seattle 2, San Diego 0

Chicago Cubs 4, Baltimore 0

N.Y. Mets 6, Washington 2

Philadelphia 4, L.A. Dodgers 3

Colorado 6, Cincinnati 5

Kansas City 8, St. Louis 5, 2nd game

Houston 9, Miami 1

Milwaukee 9, Pittsburgh 0

Thursday's Games

Colorado (Gomber 2-5) at Cincinnati (Greene 5-4), 1:10 p.m.

Washington (Gore 6-7) at N.Y. Mets (Peterson 3-0), 1:10 p.m.

Pittsburgh (Skene 5-0) at Milwaukee (Civale 2-6), 2:10 p.m.

Toronto (Gausman 6-8) at San Francisco (Hicks 4-5), 3:45 p.m.

L.A. Dodgers (Knack 1-2) at Philadelphia (Nola 10-4), 6:05 p.m.

Chicago Cubs (Steele 1-3) at Baltimore (Suarez 5-2), 6:35 p.m.

Friday's Games

L.A. Dodgers at Detroit, 6:40 p.m.

Miami at Cincinnati, 7:10 p.m.

Pittsburgh at Chicago White Sox, 8:10 p.m.

Washington at Milwaukee, 8:10 p.m.

Chicago Cubs at St. Louis, 8:15 p.m.

Midwest League

High-A Midwest League Glance

Tuesday's Games
Fort Wayne 7, Great Lakes 0

Wednesday's Games
Fort Wayne at Great Lakes, ppd.
Fort Wayne at Great Lakes, ppd.
(GM 1) Fort Wayne at Great Lakes, 5L35 p.m. with Game 2 to follow after



The Classifieds

SUDOKU

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.

King Classic Sudoku

			4	7	1	9		
	4		9		2			8
		2				1	4	
6			1		7	4	2	9
1		4	2	6	9		8	
		7						
4			7	1			6	5
		3	6			8	9	
	1	6		9			7	

Difficulty: ★★★

7/11

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Help Wanted

SOUTHERN WELLS COMMUNITY School is seeking a second shift custodian. \$20.31 per hour with benefits. Please send a resume of contact rking@swraiders.com

THE CITY OF Bluffton Street Department is accepting applications for a Laborer/Truck Driver. The minimum educational requirement is a high school diploma or equivalent. Applicants must possess and maintain a CDL License or obtain one within the time limit. The City utilizes E-Verify and follows EEOC guidelines. Applications may be obtained from the Clerk Treasurer's office, 128 East Market St, Bluffton, IN between 8:00 am and 4:30 pm Monday-Friday or at www.blufftonindiana.net. Application deadline is July 19, 2024.

WELLS COUNTY COMMUNITY Corrections is seeking an exceptional Administrative Assistant to manage the administration of client files, front desk, and general fiscal accounting operations. Responsibilities include providing executive assistance to the Director and Administration Operations Coordinator and management of the day-to-day office operations. This position is ideal for a well-organized self-motivated individual who possesses outstanding administrative and clerical skills who wants a stable long-term position within a small operation. Our ideal candidate is a detailed oriented self-starter with the ability to take the initiative and work with minimal supervision in a team environment. Candidates applying must be dependable, a team player with a flexible attitude, and have the ability to prioritize the workload under pressure and multiple tasks in a fast-paced changeable environment and show Integrity and be sensitive to confidential information. The ideal candidate is professional and has excellent communication and technical skills. Candidate must have previous experience with small office or team operations and proficiency in the use of Microsoft Office professional software. The position requires detailed data entry as well as acuity working with numbers and budgets and the use of financial software as part of daily operations. Beginning Salary \$39,921 with benefits. Send resume to Attn. Executive Director Poindexter, Wells County Community Corrections, Suite 107, 102 West Market Street, Bluffton, IN 46714 or blake.poindexter@wellsindiana.org.

Help Wanted

THE CITY OF Bluffton Clerk Treasurer's Office is accepting applications for a Deputy Clerk Treasurer. The minimum educational requirement is a high school diploma or equivalent. The City utilizes E-Verify and follows EEOC guidelines. Applications may be obtained from the Clerk Treasurer's office, 128 East Market St, Bluffton, IN between 8:00 am and 4:30 pm Monday-Friday or at www.blufftonindiana.net. Application deadline is July 19, 2024.

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Lottery Numbers

Wednesday's Drawings HOOSIER LOTTERY
Cash 5 — 05-07-18-20-35
Lotto Plus — 06-09-23-24-32-33
Cash4Life — 10-19-38-48-59, Cash Ball: 04
Quick Draw Midday — 03-11-17-20-21-26-28-38-39-40-42-44-49-50-51-57-66-71-74-78, BE: 74
Daily Three-Midday — 04-03-01, SB: 09
Daily Three-Evening — 08-01-04, SB: 09
Daily Four-Midday — 05-07-04-04, SB: 09
Daily Four-Evening — 06-08-00-01, SB: 09
Quick Draw Evening — 02-10-13-22-25-32-36-39-40-41-43-44-49-53-54-71-72-76-77-80, BE: 02
Hoosier Lotto — 04-10-15-30-34-42
MEGA MILLIONS
Estimated jackpot (for Friday): \$203 million
POWERBALL
20-22-31-33-45 Powerball: 01; Power Play: 3X

FOR SALE

Pets



FOR SALE MINI DACHSHUNDS Looking for loving homes for mini male and female dachshund puppies they are very playful and loving they have good personalities. I will be giving them their first shots and deworming and vet check. Asking \$750.00 260 701 0666 andyryan121@hotmail.com

Miscellaneous

EVEREST VX3 ICE & WATER VENDING MACHINE This Everest VX3 water/ice vending machine is the perfect addition to any business looking to boost their profits. With the ability to dispense both water and ice, this unit is sure to be a hit with customers. The machine is in great working condition and has been slightly used, making it a cost-effective option for those looking to invest in a vending machine. This unit is made in the United States and comes with a unit quantity of 1. Included is an all season insulation package, ice shield ozone disinfection, and cold fusion energy recovery. It is perfect for placement in other beverage and snack vending locations, as well as in restaurant and food service settings. Don't miss out on the opportunity to make extra money with this Everest VX3 vending machine. \$45,000.00 260-273-7020 glacierpure@outlook.com

EMPLOYMENT

Help Wanted

NEED MORE EMPLOYEES! A 20 word, line classified in the Bluffton News-Banner for a month is \$52. Contact the office at 125 N. Johnson St., 824-0224, or classifieds.news-banner.com.

This Week's Garage Sales

Clip & Save

CHURCH RUMMAGE SALE Thursday and Friday, July 11 and 12, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at The New Beginning Church, 2187 W. State Road 218, Bluffton, IN, two miles west of Poneto, five miles east of Highway 3.

HUGE SALE JULY 12-13, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., 5975 N 600 E, Tocsin. Hull dinnerware, old books, collectible dolls, household, fishing stuff, much more.

DAY FAMILY & friends garage sale Thursday & Friday, July 11 & 12, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Saturday, July 13, 10 a.m.-noon, 1124 Elm Dr., Bluffton. Furniture, jewelry, ladies clothes 0-3X, household, decor, owls, & more.

THIS OUT! PLACE A THREE day garage sale line classified ad in the Bluffton News-Banner and receive a free garage sale kit. Contact the office at 125 N. Johnson St., 260-824-0224, or www.news-banner.com and click on classifieds.

Public Notice

NOTICE

In accordance with Indiana Code 5-15-6-3 requiring prior notification to individuals when records will be destroyed:

Notice to any individuals born in the year 2002, who received special education services in Adams and/or Wells Counties. Please contact Adams Wells Special Services no later than August 9, 2024 if you wish to receive copies of your special education records. All records requested for pick-up and not picked up and non-requested records for persons born in the year 2002 will be permanently destroyed after August 16, 2024. If you wish to request records, you must call (260)824-5880 to do so. Records must be picked up by the person who received services unless otherwise legally designated.

nb 6/18 through 8/7 hspaxlp

SUDOKU ANSWER

1/2	***	**	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
4	7	6	9	8	5	3	1	2	9	8	2
1	6	8	7	2	9	8	4	1	5	6	3
5	9	2	8	1	3	6	7	4	9	8	5
9	1	9	8	7	8	1	3	2	6	7	5
8	8	3	6	9	2	7	9	1	5	4	8
6	2	7	9	1	8	8	9	4	5	3	6
7	7	1	9	8	9	7	6	9	4	1	3
8	9	9	2	8	6	1	7	1	4	2	8
2	8	6	1	7	9	9	8	5	3	7	4

Public Sale Calendar

JULY 11 - 10 a.m. - Online only - Secured creditors & various consignors, owners. 100+ skid loader attachments, tool boxes, workbenches, iron gates, chains & binders, 1 trip 40' high side shipping container w/side doors, dome shelter container, various truck take off parts, dump trucks, 2012-2014 Freightliner M2106 box trucks, day cabs, sleepers, utility trucks, bucket trucks, utility & semi trailers, SUV's, pickup trucks, 100+ skid steer attachments & much more! Accepting consignments, 815 Adams St., Decatur. **Krueckeburg Auction & Realty LLC**, 260-724-7402, kjauction.com.

BIDDING ENDS JULY 14 - Online Only - Various consignors, seller. Advertising, furniture, antiques, primitives, artifacts, band instruments, Bluffton American Legion helmets, stereo equipment, electronics, collectibles, sports memorabilia, retail video games, tools, lawn & garden, household. Preview & online bidding assistance July 11, 3-6 p.m., 102 South Jefferson St., Ossian. Sale manager Rod Fetters, 260-557-8451, *The Steffen Group Inc.*, 260-426-0633, steffengrp.com.

JULY 14-JULY 21 - (Online Only Auction) - Dave and Brenda Double, seller. 40 Year collection of trains, 2 realistic model train railway layouts, professionally milled lumber, downsizing custom craft store, shop tools, porcelain & other dolls, antiques, furniture, McCoy cookie jars, Hull pottery, Sure-Trac utility trailer, Commercial Cyclone Rake. Preview: July 11 and 18 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., 540 W US 224, Uniondale. Pat Carter, sale manager, 260-273-8294, *Steffen Group*, www.steffengrp.com, 824-3006.

JULY 16 - 2-6 p.m. ET - (Online) - Farm: William C. Lee Trust. Property Location: 6 miles south of Angola, IN, along E 700 S in Pleasant Lake, IN. 156+/- total acres, tillable farmland, timber, recreational, pole barn, chicken barn, Steuben Twp., Steuben Co. Tract 1: 101+/- acres. Tract 2: 50+/- acres. Tract 3: 5+/- acres. Open House by appointment: Rick Johnoz, 260-827-8181, Neal Wolhether, 260-336-2219, Jason Johnoz, 260-273-9177. *Halderman Real Estate & Farm Management*, halderman.com, 800-424-2324.

JULY 20 - 9 a.m. Real Estate, 9:30 Personal Property - Charles (Chuck) Bertsch Estate, owner. 3898E 400N, Bluffton. 1 1/2 story, 2-bedroom home, 36x56 pole barn, 1 acre, Lancaster Township. Hit & Miss engines (Fairbanks Morse 5 hp, Fairbanks Morse 1 1/2 or 2 hp, more), oil well display, 25-30 long guns and pistols, ammo, drill press, mill, snowblowers, trailer, M80 Military hot water heater, chain saws, welders, industrial 3 phase motors, tandem bike, yard tools, hand tools, Dixon ZTR zero turn mower, garden tractors, rear tine tiller, more. *Miz Lehman Realtors/Auctioneers*, Berne, www.mizlehman.com, 260-589-2903.

JULY 27- 10 a.m. - Elmer J. Jr. & Delia Mae Graber, owners. 8350S 850W, South Whitley. Productive, tillable land, home, outbuildings, Whitley County. Offered in 4 Tracts, 38±A. Tract 1: 12.5±A farmland, soils: Pawamo, Blount loam, Glynwood loam. Tract 2: 5.5±A, 7 bedroom home, outbuildings. Tract 3: 2±A, 40'x90' pole building. Tract 4: 18±A farmland, soils: Pawamo, Glynwood loam, Blount loam. Purchase individually or combination. Inspection: July 20, 10 a.m.-noon. Sale manager, Ritter Cox, 260-609-3306. *Schrader Real Estate and Auction Company, Inc.*, 800-451-2709, SchraderAuction.com.

JULY 28 - 4 p.m. - Online Only - Multiple consignors, owners. 1,000+ lots! 50+ firearms, long guns & hand guns, large selection of ammo, gun safe, Honda generator, hand tools, household items, lawn & garden, 300 lots of collectable vintage dollhouses, mini dollhouse furniture sets with accessories and much more! Preview July 25, 3-5 p.m., 812 Elm Street, Decatur. Pick up July 29, 1-6 p.m., July 30, 9 a.m.-noon. *Krueckeburg Auction & Realty LLC*, 260-724-7402, kjauction.com.

BIDDING STARTS CLOSING AUGUST 11 - 6 p.m. EST - Jeanette Fuhman & Robert Fuhman estate, owner. 6 p.m.: Cape Cod style, 3 bedroom, 3 1/2 bath, 3,093 sf, full basement w/Hitzer stove, Geothermal w/backup LP furnace, Generac generator, pole barns, 2 car attached garage, all sitting on 10+/- wooded acre! 6:30: Gator, Track loader, mower, 2012 Chevy Silverado, tractor, 3 point attachments, tilt bed trailer, outdoor items, hand & power tools, long & hand guns, antiques, primitives, furniture, household items, more! Preview July 29, 5-7 p.m., 4182 W 900 N, Decatur. Pick up Aug. 12, 2-6 p.m. *Krueckeburg Auction & Realty LLC*, 260-724-7402, kjauction.com.

July GOODS & SERVICES DIRECTORY

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Research: Political ads on social media rife with misinformation, scams

By DAVID KLEPPER
Associated Press
WASHINGTON (AP) — The online advertisement to Donald Trump supporters was clear enough: Click here, and receive a free Trump 2024 flag and a commemorative coin. All in exchange for taking a quick survey and providing a credit card number for the \$5 shipping and handling. "You'll get two free gifts just by taking this quick poll in support of Trump," says the ad's narrator. The ad — which has appeared on Facebook, YouTube and other platforms — didn't mention the \$80 charge that would later appear on credit card statements. Those that clicked were scammed. Political advertisements on social media are one of the best ways for candidates to reach supporters and raise

campaign cash. But as a new report from Syracuse University shows, weak regulations governing online ads and haphazard enforcement by tech companies also make ads a prime source for misleading information about elections — and a tantalizingly easy way for con artists to target victims. "There is very little regulation on the platforms," said Jennifer Stromer-Galley, the professor who led the research for the ElectionGraph Project at Syracuse University's Institute for Democracy, Journalism & Citizenship. "It leaves the American public vulnerable to misinformation, disinformation and propaganda." Stromer's research examined more than 2,200 groups on Facebook or Instagram that ran ads between September and May mentioning one of the presidential candidates. Combined, the ads cost nearly \$19 million and were seen more than 1 billion times. Data connected to the ads (and made public by Meta, Facebook's owner) shows that both right- and left-leaning ads targeted older voters more than younger ones. Right-leaning ads were more likely to target men, progressive ads were more likely to target women. Overall, conservative-leaning organizations bought more ads than progressive-leaning groups. Immigration was the top issue raised in right-leaning ads while the economy dominated progressive ads. Many of the ads contained misleading information, or deepfake video and audio of celebrities supposedly crying during a speech by former First Lady Melania Trump. Stromer-Galley noted that falsehoods in ads about urban crime and immigration were especially common. While most of the groups paying for the ads are legitimate, others seemed more interested in getting a user's personal financial data than boosting any particular candidate. Using a partnership with the data science firm Neo4j, Stromer-Galley found that some of the pages shared common creators, or ran virtually identical ads. When one page disappeared — perhaps removed by Facebook moderators — another would pop up quickly to take its place. Many of the pages sold Trump-related merchandise such as flags, hats, banners and coins or advertised fictitious investment schemes. The true motive, apparently, was to get a user's credit

card information. The ads promising a free Trump flag were placed by a group called Liberty Defender Group. Emails sent to several addresses listed for the company were not returned, and a phone number for a company representative could not be found. One website associated with the group has moved on from politics, and is now selling devices which claim to improve home energy efficiency. Meta removed most of the network's ads and pages earlier this year after researchers noticed their activity, but the ads are still visible on other platforms. The company says it prohibits scams or content that could interfere with the operation of an election and removes ads that violate the rules. In addition, the company urges its users not to click on suspicious links, or to hand over personal information to untrustworthy sources. "Don't answer messages asking for your password, social security number, or credit card information," the company said. The Trump campaign, which has no known ties to the network, did not respond to a message seeking comment. The researchers at Syracuse were only able to study ads on Meta platforms because other companies do not make such information public. As a result, Stromer-Galley said the public is in the dark about the true amount of misinformation and scams spreading on social media.

Attorney general nod

(Continued from Page 1)
 But in 2024, just a dozen states have attorney general elections and the Democratic Attorneys General Association has identified Indiana as a "potential flip" in an undated DAGA memo. Sabato's Crystal Ball has moved the race from Safe Republican to Lean Republican, signaling weakened support for the incumbent after a public reprimand following his actions in a case involving an Indianapolis doctor who performed an abortion on a 10-year-old rape victim. "It would be a heavy lift for any Democrat to beat Rokita — no Democrat has won a statewide contest in Indiana since 2012 — but a Democratic win is no longer outside the realm of possibility," Sabato's Crystal Ball concludes. Wells enlisted in the Army National Guard at 19, working her way up to lieutenant colonel — a position she has held since 2003, according to her LinkedIn. Currently, she holds a position as the Indiana Democratic Party's deputy chair for coalitions and expansion. White, on the other hand, is the president and CEO of the Indiana Coalition to End Sexual Assault and Human Trafficking but previously won back-to-back terms as Marion County Clerk between 2006 and 2014. "My career has provided tremendous opportunities, not only for me to work and have (experience in) those different spaces, but also for me to understand the relationship between federal government, state government (and) local government," White said. She likened a campaign to a long job interview but said she had what it took to actually execute those duties once in office. "All of those things really have helped prepared me. Not only to be an effective leader as an attorney general but also to understand the relationships that the attorney general has to navigate. And I have many of those relationships already," White said. **On Todd Rokita** Both candidates said that friends within state government have reported simple tasks taking an inordinate amount of time if the Office of the Attorney General is involved, such as approving contracts or routine legal work. Some attorneys have fled the office, which has several expensive contracts with outside attorneys for work that could be handled by state employees. "When I went in there, I

was surrounded by all these people who had these enormous dockets — which I eventually had — but everybody was very helpful. It was very much a team effort. But Wells said the office lacked leadership at the top levels, noting that she only saw Hill once during her tenure. Everything felt like it was left until the last minute, she said — including multimillion dollar settlements — while one-on-one mentoring partnerships and staff training were left to the wayside. "All these things that have been instilled in me from being a senior officer in the military now were absent. These are just basic principles I would expect to also see in corporate America," Wells said. Though Wells left the office before the transition, she said she still hears about the same lack of morale and absent leadership in the office under Rokita due to his partisan approach. For instance, though Rokita has put out several versions of a "Parent Bill of Rights," Wells said he has overlooked children who are sometimes harmed by those very decisions. During her time practicing family law, Wells said she saw parents who opted to homeschool their children but neglected to teach them age-appropriate basics. "I then have seven- and eight-year-olds who, because their moms took them out, do not know how to read. They do not know how to write ... Administrators come in and say they've been socialized like they're in a cage," Wells recalled. White said Rokita has "extreme positions" on reproductive choice, abortion rights, medical privacy — "or the lack thereof" — and gender identity. "We, the people of Indiana, have got to have an attorney general who's behaving differently," White said. "I'm motivated by seeing what's happening and being discouraged — and, frankly, full of a little bit of despair. And I decided to channel my despair into action." With White's position combating sexual assault and human trafficking, the office's opposition to Title IX changes that included updated language on gender identity hurt the college students who needed her services. Indiana told its schools to ignore those guidelines, which also includes requirements for addressing sexual violence, serving pregnant or breast-

feeding parents and more. "It's an ideological battle that he is fighting that is not helping — it is hurting," White said. "Todd Rokita doesn't care about (those things), because he's decided that we should just ignore the federal regulations," White said. "... he needs to stop getting involved in ideological battles that have nothing to do with making Hoosier lives better." For White, politics is a combination of timing, preparation and luck — and timing plays a crucial role due to the actions of Rokita, she said. "Elections are about choice and the people of Indiana are going to have a very stark choice, even if I don't succeed at the convention." **The other convention race** The race between Wells and White won't be the only contest on Saturday's calendar — four other Hoosier politicians have thrown their hats in the ring to compete alongside Democratic gubernatorial nominee Jennifer McCormick. McCormick's top choice, former state Rep. Terry Goodin, was controversial for some due to his conserva-

tive voting record on abortion and gay marriage — seemingly at odds with McCormick's campaign focus on reproductive choice. Three others have filed to challenge Goodin: perennial candidate Bob Kern, Indianapolis' Cliff Marsiglio and Tammie Dixon-Tatum, who fell short on ballot signatures when running to challenge McCormick. Notably, the Indiana Democratic Party doesn't allow contenders to address delegates unless they've been nominated by a delegate and receive a second from another delegate. At least one candidate has reportedly struggled to find two supporting delegates. "It has been a rule of the convention for decades that a candidate for state office must be nominated by a delegate and a 'second' from a separate delegate on the floor in order to have their name placed on the ballot for nomination. This remains the case for this convention and the rules haven't been altered this year in that regard at all," Democratic spokesperson Sam Barloga told the Indiana Capital Chronicle.

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JULY IS EYE EXAM MONTH

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What to expect at your next eye exam

Regular eye examinations are important components of a personal health regimen. Visiting an eye doctor can alert a person to potential vision impairments, and certain symptoms that show up in the eyes could be indicative of notable health problems. The American Academy of Ophthalmology says everything from brain tumors to aneurysms to high cholesterol can be detected in the eyes.

For those who do not have any apparent vision problems, most doctors recommend following a chart based on age. The insurance experts at Aetna suggest the following age-based intervals:

- Ages 20 to 39: Every five years
- Ages 40 to 54: Every two to four years
- Ages 55 to 64: Every one to three years
- Ages 65 and up: Every one to two years

Individuals who wear glasses or contact lenses, have a family history of eye disease, or have a chronic condition that puts them at risk for eye disease, like diabetes, should get vision exams more frequently.

Despite the significance of eye exams, many people do not visit an eye doctor until something is amiss with their vision or eyes. Perhaps individuals would be inclined to visit the eye doctor more frequently if they knew what to expect during an exam. Here's what people can expect the next time they step into a private eye doctor's office or a vision center, courtesy of The Cleveland Clinic and Warby Parker.

- Visual acuity: The eye doctor will ask you to read an eye chart while looking through a device called a phoropter. This device has several lenses that can be adjusted to help you see better and find the right corrective lens prescription.
- Visual field: The doctor will check peripheral vision by holding up a finger or an object and moving it gradually to the side of your face. Additional movements may include up and down. Some offices use a computer program to conduct this test.
- Automatic refraction: Visual acuity can be measured with this test, during which an autorefractor shines light into the eye and measures the eye's response. It's commonly used with children or adults who may struggle to communicate what they're seeing.
- Pupil function: The eye doctor will briefly shine a handheld light into each eye and then move the light away to watch how the pupils constrict and dilate.
- Slit lamp exam: This test involves a slit lamp, which is a type of microscope that enables the eye doctor to see

the eyes in close detail.

- Tonometry measurement: Glaucoma occurs when intraocular pressure is high. Some eye doctors will conduct tests to determine the pressure. One way is with a non-contact tonometry test, which is a puff of air squirted at each eye. With applanation tonometry, the doctor first administers a mild numbing agent to the eye, and then uses a pressure-sensitive instrument to gently tap on the surface of the eye to get a pressure reading. A rebound tonometry test requires a handheld device that makes brief contact to the eye and doesn't require local anesthesia.
- Pupil dilation: The eye doctor will administer eye drops that dilate the pupils, which enables a better view of the retina, optic nerve, cornea, and surrounding blood vessels during an ophthalmoscopy.
- Special photography: The eye doctor may utilize specialized imaging equipment that will take digital images of the eyes to diagnose various retinal, optic nerve and corneal conditions.

These are some of the things people may experience during a comprehensive vision exam.



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